

Washington, DC -- Rep. Peter Welch is seeking to advance his Carbon Neutrality Act of 2007, H.R. 823, by asking for co-sponsorships from his House colleagues.

Welch sent a letter to his colleagues asking for support for the measure today.

On February 5, Welch launched an initiative to make his congressional offices in Vermont and Washington carbon neutral working to reduce energy use and by offsetting his office's carbon emissions. By providing financial support for two Vermont renewable energy projects, Welch offset the greenhouse gas emissions related to his office activities so they will not contribute to global warming.

Prohibited by current law from using federal funds allotted for office operations, Welch will use personal funds to pay the cost for the offsets. Welch authored legislation to allow Legislative offices and Executive agencies to use their budgets to account for their environmental impacts.

In the letter, Welch wrote "While the challenges of global warming must be addressed through comprehensive legislation, we also have the opportunity to take practical, immediate actions as a first step and serve as an example. The Carbon Neutrality Act of 2007 is that first step."

The co-sponsors already on the bill include Rep. Earl Blumenauer (OR-03), Rep. Keith Ellison (MN-05), Rep. Jay Inslee (WA-01), Rep. Steve Israel (NY-02), and Rep. Doris Matsui (CA-05).

Last week, former Senator John Edwards announced his presidential campaign would be carbon neutral, also offsetting his global warming impacts through Vermont's NativeEnergy.

Welch is also an original co-sponsor of the Safe Climate Act, authored by Rep. Henry Waxman.

The letter to Welch's House colleagues follows:

Go Carbon Neutral!

Join the Carbon Neutrality Act of 2007 and Take a Step to Address Global Warming

March 19, 2007

Co-sponsors: Rep. Earl Blumenauer, Rep. Keith Ellison, Rep. Jay Inslee, Rep. Steve Israel, and Rep. Doris Matsui.

Dear Colleague,

I hope you will join me in supporting legislation authorizing legislative offices and federal agencies to go carbon neutral by co-sponsoring H.R. 823, the Carbon Neutrality Act of 2007.

While the challenges of global warming must be addressed through comprehensive legislation, we also have the opportunity to lead by example and take practical, immediate actions as a first step.

The Carbon Neutrality Act of 2007 is that first step. This legislation **allows legislative offices and executive agencies to account for their global warming impact through the purchase of greenhouse gas offsets or renewable energy credits.**

Through this measure, you can join businesses, organizations, and individuals who are already taking the lead in addressing global warming by offsetting their environmental footprint.

This initiative will allow offices to use their appropriated budget to purchase carbon offsets. There is no requirement for any office to do so. For my office, the cost is a modest \$672/year for offsetting 56 tons of carbon.

Carbon neutrality initiatives allow Congress to serve as an example and support renewable energy projects and initiatives.

This initiative also reinforces the Speaker's goal-and one I believe is shared by Republicans and Democrats alike- that *"the Capitol complex should lead the nation in preserving our planet for future generations."*

To become a co-sponsor or for more information on my office's own carbon neutrality plan, please contact Andrew Savage (6-8346 or andrew.savage@mail.house.gov).

Please consider joining me in co-sponsoring the Carbon Neutrality Act of 2007 and taking this concrete step forward.

Sincerely,

Peter Welch
Member of Congress